



arts•gram

A Daily
Publication of the
National Veterans
Creative Arts
Festival

for Friday, October 20, 2000

New Directions Choir Wows Crowd at VA Headquarters

Employees at VA headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C., got a special early-morning treat as they arrived for work yesterday. To promote and generate interest in Saturday's show, the 11 members of the New Directions Choir, under the direction of Steven Boulden, performed in the lobby. The members of the Choir are: Gary Bergner, Glenn Berry, Carlton Godwin, Charles Harris, George Hill, Ronald Howard, Michael Rollins, Gregory Speech, Herman Stevens, Courtney Stevenson and William Turner, Jr.

The a cappella group sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," some gospel and pop numbers, and "We Are Made As One," the song they'll perform during Saturday's show. Flyers for the performance were handed out to the VA headquarters employees who stopped to listen. They crowded the lobby, and many clapped along with the music. The group members said they were pleased with the acoustics in the marble lobby of the building.

The members of the choir are formerly homeless veterans who were residents of New Directions, a long-term residential treatment center located on the grounds of the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. Many of the Choir members have been singing since childhood, and they say they are honored to be here performing as first-place winners in the vocal group, pop category.

"It is hard to put into words how it feels to have been chosen as a national winner in the Festival competition," said Berry, a Marine Corps veteran, "but 'honored' and 'proud' are at the top of the list. It is wonderful to accomplish this with the other members of the choir

who are also my brothers, who I love."

"It feels wonderful," said Godwin, an Army veteran, "not just to be recognized by winning this competition, but also to have the opportunity to perform on a national stage with my friends. It's a tremendous feeling."

Group members are quick to credit New Directions, a non-profit agency founded by veterans, with helping them get their lives back on track.

"I feel blessed to be a part of New Directions," said Speech, also a Marine Corps veteran. "This program has saved

my life. I was homeless—lost spiritually and physically. I've had this voice all my life but was never given the opportunity to use it the way God intended."

"We are a bunch of homeless veterans who were given a chance to change our lives," said Howard. "We took it as a challenge, and here we are. I have a great feeling of camaraderie with the other members of the Choir. It's a feeling I haven't had since the military. The closeness we have as a group won't let me give up."

From Empty Canvas to Work of Art

By Fran Heimrich, VA Central Office

The room was filled with canvasses standing on easels waiting for someone to give them a coat of paint. Laughing and joking, the 25 participants in yesterday's Acrylic Painting workshop arrived and looked for a seat next to a friend.

To an observer, it was obvious that painting is a love affair for some, and a new experience for others. "Developing a clear idea of what you're going to do is 50 percent of the task," workshop leader Lanet Moravec told the group.

Participants heard that painting consists not only of putting paint on a canvas but also includes the following basic art principles: a fully developed idea of what you're going to paint, a focal point, design, value, rhythm and color.

"Studies have determined that viewers 'read' a painting by starting in the lower left-hand corner and moving to the focal point and upward from there," said Moravec.

A well-designed painting draws the viewer into the work, Moravec told the

group. Color plays a significant role, and warm colors draw the eye first. The cooler the color, she said, the further away the object. Creating a delicate balance of color prevents the viewer's eye from leaving the painting.

As students applied the first wash of color to the canvas, some applied the paint as if painting a house, while others dabbled, leaving small circles.

"Acrylic is different from working in oils," said Moravec. "You work from dark to light. The goal is to keep purity of color."

All 25 students started with a drawing of Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, which they toured in the afternoon. But each of the completed paintings was unique, perhaps reflecting each artist's own interpretation. Some were vivid, while others had an almost delicate look. Even after the class ended, many of the students stayed behind, intent on putting the finishing touches on their own works of art. Acrylic Painting will be offered again today at 1:00.

Spotlight on Our Emcees

Master of Ceremonies

Ernest Borgnine

Actor Ernest Borgnine has appeared in more than 100 films, both features and for television. His portrayal of the Bronx butcher "Marty" won him an Oscar in 1955. His other films include "From Here to Eternity," "The Dirty Dozen" and "The Poseidon Adventure."

From 1962 to 1966, Borgnine starred in the TV series "McHale's Navy." More recently, he played Dominic Santini on "Airwolf" for three seasons. His other TV credits include "Little House on the Prairie," "Murder

SheWrote" and "JAG," and he received Emmy and Golden Globe awards for his performance in "All Quiet on the Western Front" in 1979.

The Navy veteran has been honored for his support of the Navy Memorial Fund with the "Lone Sailor" award, and is an Honorary Flight Leader for the Navy's Flight Demonstration Team, the Blue Angels. He also served as chairman of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans program in 1985 and 1986.

Mistress of Ceremonies

Jane Powell

Last year's Mistress of Ceremonies is back again this year! Actress Jane Powell came to Hollywood from Oregon at the age of 14 and has since starred in more than 20 major films (mostly musicals) including classics like "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" and "Royal Wedding," which co-starred Fred Astaire.

She has starred in every major

entertainment medium, and has performed for five U.S. Presidents and the Queen of England. Whether singing, dancing, acting in drama or comedy on Broadway or in summer theater, Jane Powell has done it all.

Powell first served as mistress of ceremonies at the 1991 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in Des Moines, Iowa.

Things to Know

Departure Information

If you have not stopped by the Host Room to give your departure flight times and the airport you will be leaving from to Joe or Clarence in Transportation, please do so as soon as possible. They need your flight information to complete a shuttle schedule that will be handed out today.

Helpful Hints from the Medical Suite

Those of you who will be singing in tomorrow's show should avoid drinking or eating dairy products like milk and cheese, or drinking orange juice. These items increase the production of mucus, which clings to vocal chords and decreases voice quality.

It's also allergy season, so those of you who have nasal or chest congestion should pay particular attention to this advice. To maximize your voice quality, Joyce and Gale from the Medical Suite recommend that you drink lots of water or hot tea.

Orchids Anyone?

David George, of New York, N.Y., has an unusual hobby and he'd like to find out if anyone else at the Festival shares his interest. George has been growing orchids for the past year and a half. He says he's acquired a lot of plants already, and he's active in a local orchid society back home.

The Army veteran is here this week as the first-place winner in the national music competition's instrumental solo, pop category. He'll perform the song "AC-DC Current" on the clarinet at Saturday's show. George is interested in talking to anyone who shares his interest in orchid growing or gardening.

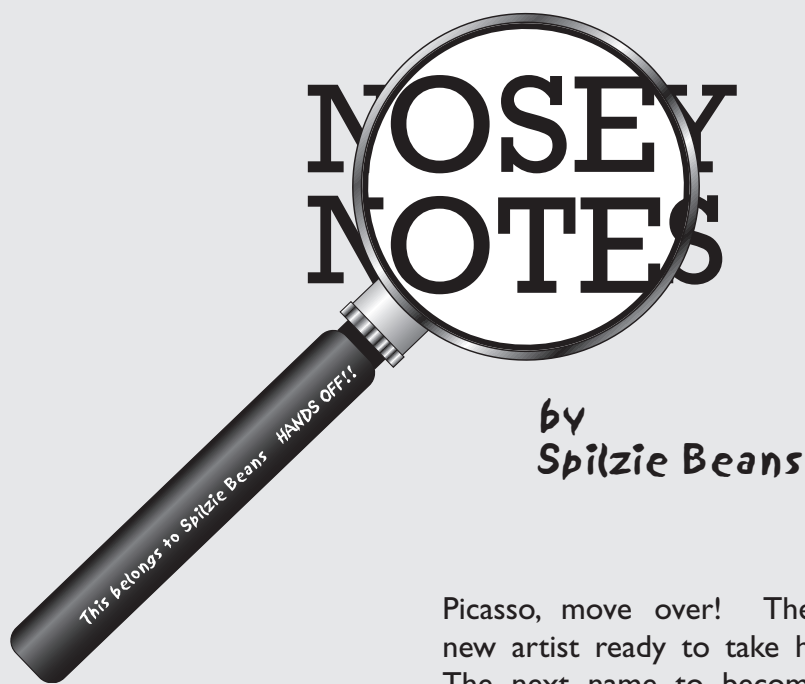
Creative Quotes

"Having the chance to display my work on such a grand scale is a very great thing. Being a photographer allows me to get away. After looking through a lens, you can't help but view the world around you with a very different view. The camera lens and subject allow me to create my own magic! 'Requiem' is dedicated to all the veterans who served wherever they served and who left a piece of themselves behind—whether emotional, mental or physical."

Ron "Doc" Ross, Palisade, CO

"I'm really excited to have been chosen a winner in this national competition. Arts and crafts have always been very therapeutic for me because they help me focus on something other than my illness and to stay calm. Art is something to be shared and being at the Festival is an opportunity for 'Wreath Cherub' to get out of my house and be seen by others. I feel tremendous satisfaction—it's always nice to do something nice and be recognized for it."

Paul Parks, Denver, CO



Spilzie hates to bring up the busts again, but many of the participants want to know why they had to pose nude when the final product was a bust? Any thoughts?

"I want my Mommy," cried Kevin Conillo. Spilzie hears that he was awakened by his Mommy very late at night/early in the morning calling to ask if he was eating right! Eating right? She obviously doesn't realize that he is truly food greedy. Meanwhile, due to unfounded gossip, a suspicious character told Kevin that an innocent Melody Moravec took his crackers. His revenge was quickly squelched as he discovered she was only trying to help him out by putting them in his coat pocket. Where's the trust?

I'll not name names but Spilzie hears that those white chocolate capitols were a big hit at yesterday's luncheon. Seems they bore a faint resemblance to a few of the hairless domes at this year's Festival.

Hey! What's with the caricatures? I get it. They're self-portraits, right? If that's true, it must mean someone here is impersonating a human. The alien is too true to be an imposter!

Picasso, move over! There is a new artist ready to take his place. The next name to become world renowned is Lanet (Moravec). Her acrylic painting class was a big hit. But Bob Hand (Anchorage, AK) and William "Bots" Botsford (Bloomington, MN) should have been working on that quaint gazebo in the garden rather than trying to capture the essence of Lanet's headband!

It's great to see Thaddius Holloway, Chicago, IL, back this year. The chorus members will truly be enriched with your beautiful voice. For those who didn't know, Thaddius has posed for "GQ" (the gentlemen's fashion magazine) numerous times. He was even offered a contract with "Playgirl" but he insisted on posing with his clothes on – so that went south, so to speak. Who says clothes don't make the man?

Spilzie hears that the Mount Vernon trip was not only a tour but also an education in oral hygiene. Seems that John Prather (Salt Lake City, UT), wanted everyone to know that George Washington's teeth were not wood. They were made from rhinoceros tusks, animal teeth and other human teeth. Uck! Aren't you glad you didn't live in that age?

Today's Workshops

Rhythm of Hope by Marianne B. Talbot

This workshop will provide an overview of the many benefits of dance and movement therapy and demonstrate ways in which persons with disabilities can participate in dance and movement activities.

When: 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Where: Ballrooms C & D

Acrylic Painting by Lanet Moravec

This workshop will identify concepts (traditional and contemporary), in acrylic painting techniques and principles. Participants will have an opportunity to apply the techniques on canvas as they capture their personal impressions of the Washington, D.C. Festival experience.

When: 1:00-4:30 p.m.

Where: Martin Room



National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Schedule for Friday, October 20

Performer's Schedule		Artist's Schedule
	6am	
Breakfast at hotel 7-8:30am	7	7-8:30am Breakfast at hotel
Team leaders meeting 8am	8	8am Team leaders meeting
Team leaders meet with participants 8:30am	9	8:30am Team leaders meet with participants
9-11:30am	10	9-11:30am
Rhythm of Hope, Ballrooms C & D		Rhythm of Hope Workshop, Ballrooms C & D
Rehearsal for selected acts only, Marshall Room	11	
	Noon	
11:30am-1pm		11:30am-1pm
Lunch at hotel		Lunch at hotel
Performers depart for Constitution Hall 1pm	1pm	1-4pm
1:30-5:30pm	2	Teams 6 & 7
Rehearsal with orchestra at theater	3	Depart for Arlington National Cemetery/ Women's Memorial
	4	
	5	
5:30-7pm	6	5:30-7pm
Dinner at hotel		Dinner at hotel
7-8:30pm	7	7-8:30pm
Re-Creation Performance at hotel Ballrooms A, B, C	8	Re-Creation Performance at hotel Ballrooms A, B, C
8:30-11pm	9	8:30-11pm
Social Time at hotel, Karaoke and Ice Cream Social	10	Social Time at hotel, Karaoke and Ice Cream Social
	11	

Announcements

Parking

If you are parking at the hotel, please park on the lower levels of the garage. The upper levels are reserved for vans and buses.

Lost and Found

Lose (or find) something? Lost and Found is located in the Host Room.

Medical & Hospitality Suites

The Hospitality Suite is located on the 4th floor, Suite 442.
The Medical Suite is located on the 2nd floor in Suite 242.



BREAKFAST

Assorted Chilled Fruit Juices
Pancakes with Hot Maple Syrup
Scrambled Eggs
Home Fries
Assorted Cold Cereals

LUNCH

Mixed Green Salad
Sliced Turkey and Gravy
Cornbread Stuffing
Mashed Potatoes
Honey Glazed Carrots
Assorted Pies and Cakes

DINNER

Salad Bar with appropriate condiments
Chicken Stir Fry
Beef Stroganoff and Egg Noodles
Medley of Fresh Vegetables
Apple Cobbler with Whipped Cream
Rolls and Butter